

South Dakota AG CENSUS DATA

News Release

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2002 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE DATA RELEASED

SIOUX FALLS, JUNE 7, 2004 - The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) has released the complete results of the 2002 Census of Agriculture. The census of agriculture is conducted every five years and provides comprehensive statistics on agriculture in over 3,000 counties in the United States.

New data published for the first time shows South Dakota leading the United States in Bison production. In 2002 South Dakota ranchers had an inventory of 40,168 head of bison, or 17 percent of the total number in the U.S. This inventory was being raised on 204 farms and ranches in the state. Along with year ending inventory numbers, published data also shows 11,057 head of bison were marketed during 2002. These marketings occurred from 118 farms and ranches, with animals sold as breeding stock for further feeding and marketed for slaughter.

2002 Census of Agriculture data shows South Dakota had 31,736 farms in 2002, a decline of 1,455 from the 33,191 farms and ranches in 1997. The average size farm in 2002 had 1,380 acres, compared to 1,330 in 1997. The average age of the principal farm operator in South Dakota in 2002 was 53.3 years old, compared to 51.7 in 1997. Additional census data provides detailed information on crop production, livestock inventories, economic, demographic, and environmental data, including facts on types of farms, land use, values of sales, and government payments.

Complete data is available at the NASS website: www.usda.gov/nass/ by clicking on "Census of Agriculture". For general information about the census, visit the website or call the South Dakota Agricultural Statistics office at 605-323-6500.

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